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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

P&PD 1

MEMORANDUM FOR: Distribution List

FROM:

[redacted]
Chief, Foreign Subversion and Instability Center
Office of Global Issues

SUBJECT:

Soviet Disinformation: Allegations of US
Misdeeds [redacted]

With SOVA support, we prepared the attached report at the
request of the Secretary of State. [redacted]

[redacted]
[redacted] The report
illustrates a number of recent campaigns which can readily be
attributed to Moscow. [redacted]

Attachment:

Soviet Disinformation: Allegations
of US Misdeeds) [redacted], GI M 86-20081,
28 March 1986 [redacted]

25X1

SUBJECT: Soviet Disinformation: Allegations of US Misdeeds

25X1

OGI/FSIC/SA/ (28 March 86)

25X1

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MEMORANDUM

Soviet Disinformation: Allegations of US Misdeeds

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1. Over the past two years we have witnessed continual Soviet charges about the international behavior of the United States that the Soviets know or have substantial reason to believe are patently false. These charges, which range from allegations of US involvement in assassinations of foreign political leaders to charges that the United States is responsible for major international outbreaks of disease, emerge through a variety of channels. Some are the direct product of their own media and are therefore easily identifiable as Soviet initiatives. The Soviets, however, also use clandestine means--for example, forgeries, rumor, and placement of disinformation in the foreign press--that are more difficult to trace conclusively to Moscow. Some examples of Soviet efforts to discredit the United States are described below in several major themes.

25X1

2. US Involvement in Assassinations. Moscow often attempts to implicate the United States when an international figure dies violently.

25X1

- o Immediately after Olof Palme was assassinated in February, TASS reported that Palme had been under surveillance by the CIA for many years. This implication of US complicity in the murder was followed by a similar report in Izvestiya and in Georgiy Arbatov's eulogy to Palme. By suggesting that the pattern of Palme's murder was similar to that of Indira Gandhi, the Soviet reports resurfaced old charges of US complicity in the assassination of Indira Gandhi and other political leaders. US embassies in Spain, India, and Uruguay, as well as Sweden, reported replays in the local press of the Soviet reports.
- o In the initial report of Palme's death on 1 March, the TASS analyst also referred to the death last year of Samantha Smith. Another TASS article on the same day described an alleged FBI assessment that Smith was a menace to national security.

25X1

25X1

GI M 86-20081
28 March 1986

25X1

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- o In another report, published on 2 November 1985, TASS accused the CIA of organizing the assassination of Grenadan Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, after which the United States invaded the country. []

25X1

3. US Terrorism. Recurring Soviet themes--linking political assassinations, US aid to liberation movements, and CIA "special operations"--attack the United States for making terrorism a state policy. []

25X1

- o Recent attacks (TASS, 24 October 1985 and 7 March 1986) charged the United States with:

- conducting undeclared wars in Africa, Asia, and Central America;

- backing South African attacks against its neighbors;

- seizing hostages; and

- inciting national strife in India. []

25X1

- o In an effort to counter US accusations of Libyan involvement in terrorism, the Soviets claimed, in a 13 March 1986 edition of Sovetskaya Rossiya, that the United States is a "factory of international terror," citing US Marine Corps actions in Grenada and mercenary training in the United States. []

25X1

4. US Espionage Operations. The Soviets replay endlessly themes of secret US intelligence operations intended to subvert the populace of other countries and destabilize governments. []

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- o In January 1986 Radio Moscow charged that the CIA will be using funds to recruit scientists, journalists, missionary doctors, and university teachers to work in developing countries as CIA agents. In mid-February, elaborately fabricated packages were delivered to a number of African newspaper offices. The packages listed alleged CIA penetrations of media, and some contained over 100 names of US officials, journalists of various nationalities, and a few US university professors allegedly linked to the CIA. This disinformation operation surfaced in seven African countries and implicated media in nine other countries. Some press allegations of media associations with the CIA appeared concurrently in countries as far afield as the Philippines and Dominican Republic. []
- o The Soviets have capitalized on Yurchenko's defection, most recently in the 11 March edition of Pravda, and the scientist Alexandrov's disappearance, in a 27 January

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Czech daily citing Izvestiya, to vilify the CIA for criminal actions and violations of human rights.

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- o The Peace Corps is the target of renewed Soviet charges that it is a "hornet's nest of espionage, a center of financial and political intrigues, and a center for drug traffic." According to a 2 March 1986 TASS report, the Peace Corps' duty is to conduct subversion against governments not to the liking of the United States.

25X1

5. US Responsibility For Catastrophic Events. Whenever possible, Moscow will exaggerate or, if necessary, fabricate a story to imply US culpability in a human tragedy.

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- o In 1984 TASS and Moscow New Times reported that the United States conducted a defoliation operation in Brazil that resulted in the death of "whole tribes of Indians." This report subsequently appeared throughout Africa and in India.
- o The notorious Soviet propagandist, Iona Andronov, writing in the Soviet magazine Literaturnaya Gazeta in 1984, proved "conclusively" that the CIA was responsible for a 1981 dengue fever epidemic in Cuba that killed over 100 people.
- o Citing a report by President Daniel Ortega, Moscow New Times in October 1985 suggested that an epidemic of dengue fever and cotton disease in Nicaragua could have been the result of US use of chemical and biological weapons.
- o Although the initial charge of US responsibility for causing the AIDS epidemic was attributed to an Indian newspaper, the real impetus for a recent worldwide anti-US AIDS campaign was an article in Literaturnaya Gazeta published in October 1985. Drawing on years-old stories of biological weapons tests, the story focused on the contemporary crisis and appeared in Kuwait, Bahrain, Finland, Sweden, Peru, and elsewhere.
- o TASS, on 26 December 1985, presumably citing a Japanese source, charged that the 248 US peace-keeping troops killed in a plane crash before Christmas were returning to the United States from a secret "forward strike base."
- o On 30 January 1986 TASS cited the shuttle "Challenger" disaster as a warning of the danger of pursuing the Strategic Defense Initiative.

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6. US Diplomatic Meddling. Soviet disinformation campaigns often allege US interference in the internal affairs of Third World countries and often blame the United States for political developments that are inimical to Soviet interests. []

25X1

- o An August 1985 TASS article, citing Izvestiya, charged the 'Department of Dirty Tricks' of the CIA with giving the Prime Minister of Liberia, Samuel Doe, \$250,000 to make him discontinue diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The report accused the United States of exploiting Liberia's domestic problems and blaming the Soviet Union for them. This article appeared in a Finnish Communist newspaper shortly after the break in Soviet-Liberian diplomatic relations. []
- o For years the Soviets have accused South Africa of developing a biological "ethnic" weapon that would kill only blacks. A recent Novosti Press Agency article, citing a Senegalese source, reported that the United States was also involved in "ethnic" weapons research with the South Africans. Two Nigerian daily newspapers published the story in February 1986. []
- o Last November, in a brief Radio Moscow report (in Greek), a Soviet observer reported that the partitioning of Cyprus was caused by the United States and other Western imperialists. In February 1986, Pravda asserted that US and NATO attempts to seize Cyprus increased noticeably in recent weeks. []
- o Citing unnamed sources, Pravda inferred on 24 February that the anti-Marcos coup was prepared with the help of US special services. []
- o In mid-December 1985, articles alleging US-Israeli intentions to attack PLO bases appeared in Middle Eastern and European newspapers. These articles were based on a Soviet report given to the Yemenis who then released it to the media. []

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